

AFFIDAVIT OF MARIA DOLORES GARCIA

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF HARRIS §

Maria Dolores Garcia, appeared in person before me today and stated under oath:

"My name is Maria Dolores Garcia. I am over 18-years-old and I am competent to make this affidavit. The facts stated in this affidavit are within my personal knowledge and are true and correct.

"On or about October of 1997, when I was 14 years-old, I dreamed of a better life in the United States. I traveled alone to the border between Mexico and the United States. There I met a man named Ambrosio who was a *coyote* who took me and several other people across the Rio Grand River. We walked 2 days and 2 nights to a place called "La Alcantaria". One of the people in the group became ill and the coyote panicked and abandoned us. Shortly thereafter, helicopters flew above us and border control agents tried to pick us up and take us back to Mexico. Everyone scattered about and I ended up near a road. I stayed near the road for a while because I had fever and was feeling very ill. I was too sick to travel back home."

"Later, a man and a woman drove by in a green pick-up truck. They said their names were Daisy Oviedo and Juan Pineda and they would take me to Houston, but I would have to pay them. I told them I had no money. They said they'd find me a job so I could pay them and then they'd help me get papers. I was 14-years-old. I was sick and alone. I needed help, so I came to Houston, Texas in green pick-up truck with Daisy and Juan through Brownsville, Texas."

"Juan took me to an apartment in Houston where I stayed with another woman, Estella, and her two children for about 8 days. Juan told people at the apartment I was his niece and I was there because I had no place to go. Estella never spoke to me and Juan told me not to speak to her because she was a busybody."

"Eight days after arriving in Houston, Juan took me to another apartment complex near Bissonnet, Beachnut and Mc Avoy. I believe the address of the apartment complex is 8325

Braestinder #8 Houston, Texas. It's near a Pupusodromo Restaurant. Juan introduced me to Chuy, a man who took care of the apartments. Juan said Chuy would take me to where I would be working. Chuy took me to apartment #8 and introduced me to Carla. Chuy said, "Do what Carla says or else we'll call the police and have them arrest you." I heard him tell Carla: "Te traje carne fresca." (I brought you fresh meat.) Carla said I looked thin and sick. She said she'd help me get better."

"A few days later Carla ordered me to go into one of the bedrooms in the apartment. I entered the room and Chuy was in there. Something didn't feel right to me—I felt scared. Chuy asked me questions, "Are you a virgin? Have you ever had sex with anyone?" I told him of course not, I'm just a young girl. He said "Don't worry, I'll be good to you. It won't hurt." I started screaming and begging, "Carla please get me out of this room!" Carla said, "This is your job. Be good to Chuy." I tried to get out of the bedroom. I tried to open the door. Chuy got mad and said, "I paid 45.00 for you and you will do as I say." Chuy slapped me a couple of times across my face, took off my clothes and did things to me and forced me to have sexual relations with him."

"Afterwards I started to bleed from my vagina. I developed fever. The bleeding wouldn't stop. Carla called Juan and told him to take me back. She said I wasn't any good for making money because I was bleeding all the time. They spoke to each other in English and then Juan left the apartment. A little while later Carla got kitchen sponge and she told me to lie down and she shoved the sponge into my vagina. Carla said she had to put the sponge in to stop the bleeding because I couldn't make money if I was always bleeding. Carla took me to a clinic somewhere on Heights street and they gave me some vaginal ointment for an infection. About 4-5 days after Chuy forced me to have sex with him Carla had another man waiting for me. She said I had to have sex with him to make money to pay Juan what I owed him. Thereafter, Carla forced me have sex with 5-6 men a day. Every day for about a year Carla would remove the sponge, wash it and rinse it out and shove it back into my vagina. Juan collected the money from Carla every week."

"I was not allowed to leave. The front door was always locked. Someone was always in the apartment watching me to make sure I didn't look out of the window or try to escape. Two people, Pepe and Benita, took turns. One would stay during the day and the other would stay at night. I was never alone. I never left the apartment. There were one or two other girls working like me. Different girls came and went. I never saw them again. Once I tried to escape by jumping out the window, but Chuy saw me and told Carla's husband or boyfriend, Joel, to get me. Joel pulled me by the hair, dragged me back into the apartment, and hit me with a belt. He said, "Don't try to escape again or you'll get hurt." I didn't try again—I was too scared."

"Once, police came to the apartment and the men who were with other women in the apartment jumped out the window. Carla said to go hide in a shed because the police were looking for me. I hid in the shed. She talked to the police at the front door and told them nothing was going on at the apartment. A few months later some men broke into the apartment looking for money. They pointed pistols at us, took some money and some brown envelopes containing white powder. The men saw an older man there with me and said to him "Why are you violating her, she's just a young girl," and one of the men hit him on the head. I begged these men to take me with them, but one said it would be too much of a problem—so they left me there. Before the police arrived Carla warned me I better not say anything about what was going on in the apartment [the prostitution] because if I did she'd turn me into the police. She said no one would believe me anyway. She told me to tell police my name was Concepcion Leija (the name of the woman whose papers I had been given) and we were just assaulted at gunpoint. I was scared and did as she said. The police wanted me to testify, but Carla didn't let me."

"After that incident Carla took me to another house to a woman named Melissa Garcia. Melissa said I was now free, but that wasn't true. Every night she took me to a nightclub called Las Palmas on the 5700 block of Telephone Rd. I was forced to dance, drink and have sex with men at the club. A woman named Tencha kept a close eye on the girls at the club. There were other young girls forced to the same things I had to do. Some men, Huicho, Martin, El Negro, and El Brujo, worked with Tencha and constantly watched us to make sure we did what we were

supposed to do. The club had a hidden upstairs room with lots of beds. I was forced to have sex with men in the room every night. Melissa now collected the money. I never once had any money of my own. I prayed every night for God to please help me.”

“I met a man at the Las Palmas club, Adrian Hernandez, who later became my husband. I told him I wanted to leave the club and Melissa Garcia, but I couldn’t leave on my own. After we got to know each other he said he would help me leave. One night we were leaving the club and I acted like I was going to get into Melissa’s car, but I got into Adrian’s car instead and we left. We never looked back.”

“Later, after escaping from Melissa Garcia, my husband and I were walking to the store and we saw Juan Pineda driving in a black car. He called out to me and said he wanted to talk to me. He told me that I better give him money or else he’d tell my husband that I was a prostitute. I was ashamed and I didn’t want my husband to find out about my horrible experience, so I paid Juan some money every month. I got a job at a warehouse and paid most of what I earned to Juan. I told him my husband Juan was a poor relative who needed money. Finally, my husband said not to pay Juan anymore. I broke down and told my husband about my sickening ordeal.”

“At 14-years-old I became the victim of human trafficking and prostitution. My childhood and my innocence were taken from me. My life changed forever. I was a powerless young girl, who, weighing less than 100 lbs, tried her best to escape. Still I am so ashamed of what happened to me. I have emotional pain and memories of the disgusting and frightening things that were done to me. I also have lasting physical problems. I have a chronic vaginal infection and burning sensation that requires medication at least every 3 months. While I was pregnant with my baby girl, the doctors said there was something wrong with my pap smear. I don’t know what is wrong with me. I worry because I don’t know if I have permanent damage to my insides. I need medical help and I know I have to see a doctor. I know that if I do have a serious illness I will receive the best medical care here in the U.S. I am not the same person I was when I left Mexico at fourteen. I have seen too much and endured too much. My mother did not hear from me after I left in 1997 and she thought I had died. Neighbors even helped my

mother get a headstone for me. As far as I am concerned, in my own mind, that little girl that left Mexico is dead.”

“Things have changed between my husband and me. Since he found out what happened to me he’s distanced himself from me. He hardly talks to me. He rarely comes near me. I miss his smile, his loving words and his tender touch. I suffered terribly at the hands of the people who victimized me and I am trying to cope with the physical and emotional pain. But my husband is new to this pain. He didn’t know what really happened to me until I filed for this visa. I was too humiliated to tell him about the degrading and painful things I was forced to endure. It hurts me so much because I know my husband is suffering because of what happened to me, but I don’t know what to do to ease his pain. I pray to God every night and day and ask Him to help us through this unspeakable horror. My husband stands silently on the porch every night and just stares at the sky until its time to go to bed.”

“I tried calling the police after I escaped, but I was very scared. I was told over and over by my captors that everyone spoke English here. No one would understand me or if they did they wouldn’t believe me. I want the people who did this to me to go to jail for what they’ve done to me. I do not want other young innocent girls to experience the same repulsive forced prostitution and imprisonment that I did. I know some of the names of the people who victimized me and I have some phone numbers. I am extremely afraid of what might happen to me or to my family because I was constantly threatened that if I ever said anything to the authorities I would, “Find out who we really are.”

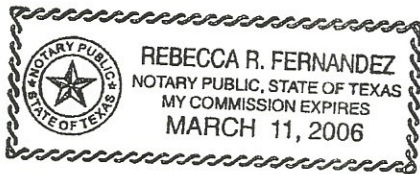
“I swear under the penalty of perjury that the above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.”

FURTHER THE AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

+ Ma. Dolores Garcia R
Maria Dolores Garcia

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED to me, the undersigned authority, on this the
20th day of August, 2003.

Rebecca R. Fernandez
Notary Public in and for the
State of Texas.



My Commission Expires 3-11-06

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION

I certify that I am fluent in both the English and Spanish languages, and that I translated the foregoing document from the English to the Spanish language to the above named person before the person signed this document.

Rebecca R. Fernandez
Rebecca R. Fernandez

8/20/03
Date